

The Labour Organiser

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A HOUSE DIVIDED

Unity—blessed word. Unity—what crimes are committed in thy name!

During three decades the Labour Party—an unwelcome partaker in the political parade—sought to bring about a new unity of the British people; a unity based on high purpose and great ideals; a unity that centred on Socialism and economic justice; a unity of workers and their friends intent on liberation, elevation, emancipation; of anticipation of fundamental changes that Reaction could not wholly stay, but which Social Democracy could effect. Such was our programme, for the good of all people and for the regeneration of society.

Did we win unity for these ends? Did we succeed at all? Let our eight or nine million votes speak for that. The greatest consolidation of workers the world has known was brought into being.

Our far-flung organisation also points the answer; our thousands of local combinations, our unique network of territorial machinery (the envy of all our enemies), plus the tireless activity on a thousand fields week by week, aye, night by night.

Looking back, we can claim that Labour did succeed. Its army, its munitions, its determination were all there; its victory and the vindication of its unity of purpose were near at hand.

Then came the war and the electoral truce. Also, in parentheses, the unjustifiable downing of arms by many Labour workers as if a *political* truce had come about.

The grand unity of the British Labour Party was extended by common consent to the other political parties. Henceforth, or for the nonce, we would not fight, but fraternise. In a common cause against a common enemy we would have a unity which should unite past friends and foes against the outside enemy.

We could right well ask here how the truce has stood up to expectations, or at least whether it has inflicted ill or good upon our prospects or our personnel. But that course would be quite useless at present, for the political truce will last a long time yet, and there is no intention to decry it. Nor could we to-day view with clear eye its effects upon our Party. We don't know the future, so why speculate?

* * *

But there is an attack upon national unity which demands our attention. It consists of a long series of dangerous, insidious and at times vicious onslaughts on this or that section of the people. Scarce one of us escapes the spleen that is poured out on the British people by Britishers themselves.

The net effect is to make the nation not one unity, but a series of warring, snarling divisions, engaged the more venomously, not in meeting the enemy, but in internecine confussions, jealousies, and ill-usage. There are many to-day, in both high and low authority, who seem bent on splitting the nation into fragments; not fragments of class interests, mark you, or political or economic interests, but just

units of discord. By a sowing of venom against their own countrymen, the spume of war hatred is thrown back on those at home, to our own burning and destruction.

Strange complexes accompany all wars. But the queerest complex is that of the person so full of enthusiasm for his side and so full of hatred of the other, that he spills his hate all around him. Friends are attacked, friends are fought, everybody must catch it. Everyone is suspect of possessing too little will to victory and comes in for scathing. As we shall see presently, this is a mild instance of the sort of the discord-making and quarrel-spreading we are about to expose.

But why deal with it at all in the L.O. it is asked. The answer is: just because the sort of disunity that is abroad is utterly alien to and destructive of Labour ideals, Labour institutions and Labour prospects. One may go further and say: A house divided against itself cannot stand. And that carries an ugly moral.

* * *

The arch offenders are the newspapers. No day passes but some section of the population is pilloried. Indeed, if all that is alleged against different sections be but half true we are, as a nation, well worthy of all the ill that Hitler can do to us.

The newspapers may raise our detestation of these or those of our countrymen unthinkingly, or for their own profit, or for other ends. Anyway, they are not consistent.

One time the young man reserved in industry was an object of scorn. The papers who to-day call for the return of miners, farm-men and others to industry then shrieked against the reserved lists till they were altered.

Take the fate of the evacuees. At the outbreak of war the papers told families to leave. Soon we heard the cry about funk-holes directed at those able to bear the cost of evacuation themselves and so take it off the taxes. We despised these people accordingly. People returned home and we heard the cry of compulsion. We called our fellows fools and their women too. Later people left home again and then we had our fury directed to those who had "left others to protect their homes," plus a demand that the homes be taken off such people!

We had a whole barrage of spite directed against housewives whose homes had been invaded and who were at least entitled to some sympathy. The evacuees themselves got a share of our press-raised enmity, for we heard they were lazy, developed into "shop-crawlers," and that the children were smelly anyway.

That word "shop-crawlers" reminds us of our press hate and suspicion of every shopkeeper. The only just salesman in the country is, of course, the newspaper man, who sells us four pages instead of 20 for the same price, and gets both his news and advertisements at the expense of our taxes! Every shop-keeper has been dubbed a potential rogue (and of course we hate the lot).

To-day it is the shopper's turn. Your wife is a greedy "crawler" every time she looks for dinner, especially so if she carries a basket and sets out early on her fruitless quest.

Let us stop this illustrating and give you a list. Let us see who we must suspect or condemn. It's a long list and we must jumble them up together.

There are the food hoarders, of course (how many can find food to hoard?); the alarm and despondency people; the idle talker; the "shelter bugs"; the deep shelter fanatics; the black racketeers; the army food-wasters; the factory shirkers; the incompetent factory managers; the selfish bus passengers; Whitehall, the Colonel Blimps and brass hats; the race-goers; the wicked motorist; the self-satisfied civil servant; the "under the counter" shop-keeper; the queue waiter; the blitz sightseers; and lots more.

Of ramps there are no end. We have counted up two dozen in ten seconds, and the rogues engaged in these must number millions. Altogether we have learnt to suspect and despise everybody. There is no-one left to love.

* * *

Now isn't all this silly? The public doesn't think so. It follows the newspaper song of hate and suspicion and believes ill of everyone. Faith in our countrymen is weakened, nay destroyed. And a Government that has made some errors in its dictations, lives comfortably and is paid comfortably, and bolsters up a system by which its class can get all the food it wants, is, in turn becoming suspect. The news-

(Concluded on page 15)

MOVES OF POPULATION

The "World's Press News" published a little time ago some interesting figures of the movements of population in the various counties of England. The investigation had been carried out by newspaper interests to get a basis for revised distribution. The figures were relative to conditions at the beginning of this year.

LOST

	Per cent.
London	27
Essex	16
E. Sussex	12
Kent	11
East Riding	10
Hampshire	7
Suffolk	6
Lancashire	6
Durham	6
Northumberland	5
W. Riding	3
N. Riding	3
Norfolk	2
Warwick	1
Stafford	1
Lincs	1

GAINS

	Per cent.
Bucks	35
Berks	30
Somerset	28
Herts	22
Oxford	21
Hunts	20
Wilts	20
Herefordshire	20
Beds	19
Cornwall	17
Northants	17
Westmoreland	15
Shropshire	12
Cumberland	11
Devon	10
Cambridgeshire	9
Worcestershire	7
Gloucestershire	7
Rutland	7
W. Sussex	5
Leicestershire	4
Dorset	3
Cheshire	2
Surrey	No change

The counties of Wales have all gained in varying percentages from 11 per cent in Denbigh and Carmarthen

to 2 per cent in Glamorgan. The average gain throughout Wales is about 7.7 per cent.

We are indebted to Mr. Harold Croft, Registrar of Study Courses, for the above information, which conveys a moral to many of our Parties. We shall be interested to note this year's membership figures for Bucks and Berks, not to say Somerset and some of the others.

How fares the fight down there, comrades, with your big new population?

Workers' Film Association Limited

It will be of interest to the many Societies, Branches and Local Parties associated respectively with the Co-operative Movement, the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party who undertake education and propaganda by means of the film, to know that the Workers' Film Association is now a registered Co-operative Society, its registered offices being at Transport House, Smith Square, Westminster, S.W.1.

Under the rules of the Association, it is now possible for associated organisations of the three above-mentioned working-class bodies to become associate members for a subscription of one guinea per annum. In due course each associated body will be circularised with full details of this scheme, which will include a free advice bureau on all technical problems involved in the production and distribution of sub-standard films, the free issue of a monthly bulletin containing reviews of the monthly releases of feature and documentary films, the monthly issue of "The Cine-Technician," published by the Trade Union of technicians in the film industry, and other important publications issued from time to time by the three democratic movements.

Full particulars of the scheme may be obtained from the secretary at the above-mentioned registered office.

The Policy Conferences

"Best conference ever held in the area."

The above quotation is taken from one of the glowing reports received by the Labour Party of the Democracy and Reconstruction Conferences now being held throughout the country. The keenness and interest shown by the delegates and the large attendances indicate that this series has proved to be immensely popular.

The object of these conferences is to indicate in outline the scope and content of the Labour Party's general ideas and suggestions bearing on the problems of the reconstruction of national life when peace returns. Further, to induce our Labour councillors, officers, and the rank and file of the movement to think of national planning first in relation to their own towns and localities and secondly, from these centres of life and activity to the whole nation.

The problem of post-war reconstruction is vast and covers a very wide field. There are problems of transition that will need to be carefully weighed although only temporary, and there are still greater problems to be faced for the ultimate rebuilding of England and, through our foreign policy, Europe itself. Such matters as the clearing of "blitzed" areas, the return of evacuees, the transfer of industry from a war to peace basis all need serious attention. Those problems which are fundamental to the nation, such as Finance and Industry, Agriculture, Town and Rural Planning, and, not least, Education and the Social Services, will all need to be grappled with in the changed circumstances confronting us at the end of the war.

Already our Movement has shown its worth to the nation in the way in which it has taken a large share of the responsibility in the conduct of the war, and our councillors, officers and members in all localities are day by day doing important work in the war effort. Still greater effort will be called for in the building of peace worthy of our tradition.

It is absolutely essential, therefore, that all these problems should be dis-

cussed now by our leaders and all our divisional and local parties and women's sections, and, for that reason, representation from these bodies should be as large as possible at the conferences in the different areas.

Conferences have already been held at Sheffield, Bradford, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Northampton, Coventry, Nottingham, Wellington, Bristol, Taunton, Colchester, Swansea, Edinburgh and Stirling, and further of these are being arranged at Bolton, Warrington, Crewe, Accrington, Barrow-in-Furness, Brighton, London, Ipswich, Lincoln, Rhyl, Newport, Pontypridd, Glasgow, Lanark, Dundee and Aberdeen.

We believe that these conferences should be the prelude to further study of our Party's policy, and in order that Parties may have an opportunity of discussing in further detail the questions taken at these conferences, the National Agent's Department is prepared to help Parties by providing speakers to address meetings—discussion circles, members' meetings, local government groups or public meetings.

We regret to announce the death which took place recently of Mr. William Herron whom most of our readers will remember as having been a prominent worker in the Party some years ago and also at one time a Labour agent. Mr. Herron was killed in an air raid at Barrow-in-Furness while staying in a local hotel and all his former colleagues will join with us in regretting this tragedy.

We were unaware until recently of the tragic fate which also befell another old friend and former Labour agent, viz., Jack Lees of Belper, who at one time represented that constituency in Parliament. Mr. Lees had for many years suffered from the effects of a serious illness. The loss of his wife a few years ago had been a great blow to him. His death occurred from a fall in his own home at the comparatively early age of 56.

MENTIONS

We note that the "Industrial News" is to suspend publication for the present and its service of news and information will be incorporated in "Labour" the monthly official organ of the T.U.C.

The "Town Crier," Birmingham, after a long and honourable career is henceforth to pass definitely into the hands of a Registered Friendly Society formed to carry on the paper. It has for some time been edited by Jim Simmons and has evinced a liveliness and interest of particular value to a Movement of the size of Birmingham. The next step must be a vastly increased circulation.

The "Reading Citizen" has adopted a new format. It has now a 16 page large quarto and in its new dress it is, we think, more readable and attractive. Its reading caters for all good tastes and we note that Miss Bondfield herself is a regular contributor. The "Citizen" circulates outside Reading and it is also the official organ of the Berkshire Federation of Labour Parties.

Reading Labour Party announce a Vegetable, Fruit and Flower Show to be held in the Labour Hall on August 23rd. There are 32 classes and competitions. Are there any more, or many more, similar functions being held in other parts this year? We have not heard of them.

The Warwickshire Federation of Labour Parties is to hold a Conference on July 20th to discuss "Lessons of the Blitz and their Relation to Regional Organisation." Alderman George Hodgkinson of Coventry (Chairman of Coventry Emergency Repairs Committee), is to lecture, certainly he should know something of the subject: we note that Mr. Hodgkinson's advice has been made available in quite far off centres.

Woolwich with its still remaining membership of 3,567 is not satisfied to a loss of 1,300 members on account of the war. The last issue of the

"Pioneer" is a membership issue, and the E.C. appeals to each member to obtain at least one new recruit through either of the following avenues:—

- (1) In your own immediate family circle. Your son or daughter if not yet enrolled are possible members.
- (2) Your next door neighbours, if Labour, are possible members. Try to enrol them.
- (3) Your visiting friends are possibly Labour, but not yet members. Try to enrol them.

We have always maintained that the great bulk of Labour's vote which is not consolidated in membership is to be found in Labour homes. Woolwich evidently thinks so too, and despite their terrible experiences they are going to tackle that problem.

From West Leyton comes a particularly cheering report. Propaganda meetings have been good and the interest excellent; a bulletin is sent to each member each month, while the M.P. sends a quarterly message; all key officers are still operating and the Women's Section work is successful and encouraging. It is a striking fact to note that a series of public dances at the Town Hall are turning out well. The first two realised a profit of £41. Weekly whist drives are making a larger profit than in peace time and Party finance generally is sound. The Labour Hall lettings too are rising, and the Hall (no liquor is sold) is free of debt. The Secretary concludes:—

"The political interest of active members is still as high, if not more so, than in pre-war times. Members are anxious to think over problems for themselves and not to follow blindly the policy of 'do nothing, discuss nothing—a war's on'! Keen criticism and constructive action is taken on political matters and local government administration.

"Whilst nothing startling can be recorded—the main thing is that in this East London Blitz area (actually a real No. 1 vulnerable area), our Party is alive and organisation is well-grounded, for which thanks are due to

our many workers—everyone entirely voluntary and unpaid.”

Congratulations to our old friend Ben Clare of the Clayton (Manchester) D.L.P. We note that this Division is top of the tree in Manchester for membership. Mr. Clare, by-the-way, has a son in the R.A.F. who is now in Egypt. Clayton's M.P. is John Jagger of N.U.D.A.W.

The Ipswich “Forward,” which ceased publication last autumn, has now reappeared in duplicated form and consists of four foolscap pages—sufficient to carry quite a lot of good propaganda matter, Party news and announcements, and other interests. We do really wonder at the fact that there are so many Labour Parties who neglect the possibilities of a duplicated sheet. The one under notice is particularly well set out and interested readers should send 2d. in stamps to the Ipswich D.L.P., 33 Silent Street, Ipswich, for a copy. Last year's balance sheet which is now to hand indicates that there was a prosperous financial year notwithstanding that Ipswich is by no means a healthy area at present.

Norwich still maintains its 4-page quarto Bulletin in printed form. The News-Letter now before us contains some striking propaganda matter which is the result of personal dealings with workers' problems.

In the “Bristol Labour Weekly” we find a particularly interesting women's corner. The worst of quite a lot of such columns is that they are not attractive enough to appeal to men and they don't appear to contain much of interest to women either! This column is an exception and appears to deal with brass tacks and real working women's problems.

From the Barkstone Ash D.L.P. we hear that the farm workers are waking up. A recent happening is of interest:

In February last at Newton Kyme in the centre of the fox-hunting fraternity, a labourer, a Mons hero, was evicted from his tied cottage. The man, his wife and two daughters, together with their worldly goods were put into the snow-covered village street. The Vicar, the Rev. H. Bairstow, took pity on them and took the family and their

belongings into the Vicarage and there they still are as there is no house to be got. The Vicar started a newspaper correspondence which resulted in his being prosecuted for contempt of Court owing to his ridiculing the magistrates who granted the eviction order. This affair has roused the people in the district and it is hoped to be able to form a live Branch of the Labour Party in the nearby town of Tadcaster, which has hitherto known no authority except that of Brewer and Landlord.

The Vicar appears to be throwing a big proportion of his energies into Labour Party propaganda, and we note that it is intended to raise a fund to pay his legal expenses.

The East Lewisham L.P. is a large and powerful organisation with still 1,800 known paying members although there are on the books many more who, for reasons connected with the war, cannot be contacted at the present time. The record of last year's working is highly creditable. To have collected £265 4s. 11d. in members' subscriptions was alone a fine performance. The balance sheet includes other items of income totalling £900 in respect of competitions and social affairs.

We have not in the past had much news from Swansea and the Report of the Swansea Labour Association is therefore particularly welcome. It is got up in booklet form and consists of 32 pages and cover. It embraces a highly interesting and independently written report of the past year's events, together with Party figures and accounts, and a detailed directory of the secretaries and Party officials. Finance appear to be in a particularly healthy state.

One of the most striking parts of the Swansea Report is that which reproduces a form which was sent out during the year by the Swansea Corporation to all employees, who were requested to sign same. The form read:—

“I hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that I am not a conscientious objector or a member of the Peace Pledge Union; nor do I hold views which are in conflict with the purpose to which the Nation's effort is directed in the present war.

AND I further declare that I whole-heartedly support the vigorous prosecution of the war.

Dated this day of 1940

(Signed)

(Witness)

..... Department.

Men of Harlech! Be ye dreaming?

It is hard to believe this inquisition was actually attempted to be put into force. Thank goodness the workers refused to fill in this form and the Labour Association roundly condemned it and secured its withdrawal. One wonders whether the Swansea Corporation before issuing this form carefully removed from the hoardings the placards which read "your freedom is in peril." Verily the price of liberty (even the liberty to think), is eternal vigilance. Thank goodness, too, the lamp of liberty still burns in our local Labour Parties.

The South Wales Regional Council of Labour in association with the South Wales Miners' Federation have published a pamphlet entitled "The Old Age and Widows' Pensioners' Guide." The purpose of the document is to serve as a guide to Trade Union officials and others in the understanding and representation of the rights of elderly people. Perusal of the pamphlet which runs to 20 pages is clear vindication of the need of such a publication, for no ordinary person could be expected to understand the details or the rigmarole with which grudging justice to the workers is surrounded. The author of the pamphlet is Ness Edwards, M.P., and we congratulate him on a clear and exhaustive piece of work. The price is 3d. each or 2/6 per dozen, and copies may be obtained from the South Wales Miners' Federation or from Mr. George Morris, Secretary, Regional Council of Labour, Transport House, 42 Charles Street, Cardiff.

MORE CANDIDATURES

BEDS. (Mid): Mr. William Howell, 56 Princes Street, Dunstable, Beds.

LINCS.: Grimsby.—Mr. J. R. Penistan, 52 Signhills Avenue, Cleethorpes, Lincs.

RENFREWS: Greenock.—Mr. Hector McNeil, 15 Sutherland Street, Glasgow, W.2.

WITHDRAWAL

FORFAR: Dundee.—Mr. Hector McNeil.

Labour Party Agents' Superannuation Society

Our readers will be interested to learn that, following the decisions of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party, immediate steps were taken to set up a superannuation society under the above name.

Applications for membership have been received from every acting Labour agent in the country with the exception of one blitzed victim and another whose Party has been blitzed practically out of existence. These men will, of course, not be overlooked.

Some applications have been received and accepted from those temporarily out of service and seconded for other duties. There are a few others in this position whose applications will, for various reasons, be deferred until they return to agency duties, when, according to the arrangements made, they may join on the same footing as their fellows.

As we go to press we learn with satisfaction that the Labour Party has almost realised the sum required to wipe out the initial deficit. We further understand that a meeting is being held later this month of the nominated *pro tem* trustees for the purpose of clearing up certain details and performing certain necessary acts.

Scotland's New Woman L.P. Organiser

Mrs. Mary Auld, who has just been appointed Woman Organiser for Scotland to succeed the late Mrs. Agnes Lauder, is no stranger to her new duties. As a member of the Scottish Executive for many years she has visited Parties all over Scotland representing the Scottish Council. She is secretary of the Scottish Joint Committee of Co-operative, Labour and Trade Union Women; the representative of Scotland, Northumberland and Durham on the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations; an official of her Advisory Council and of her Women's Section.

Her appointment has given general satisfaction to Labour Women throughout Scotland and there is no doubt that her experience gained inside the Movement, coupled with her cheerful personality, will be of great value and service to the Labour Party north of the Border.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE

Points of Order

Question.—"Our divisional meetings are well attended in spite of the war. Lately we have had a lot of trouble over points of order coming always from two or three people, and these points, coming unexpectedly, are sometimes not too easy to deal with. I should say that I am chairman of the Party. These "points of order" boys are sometimes very clever and I should like to be upsides with them. Can you recommend some easy book or guide that might help me on these matters?"

Answer.—Our friend does not mention whether there are any Standing Orders or indicate what particular points arise. If they are points which arise out of the Party Constitution or Rules, as is often the case, the only thing is to possess a superior knowledge of the rules and of their meaning and intentions. Study the rules again and again and if there are any special points of doubt write to the Organisation Department of the Labour Party and get a ruling.

If the points of order are those which arise out of the conduct of business, a chairman would do well to read up Walter Citrine's "A B C of Chairmanship." A former book by the same writer, entitled "The Labour Chairman," was more handy for the purpose, and only half the size, but fortunately the "A B C," published in 1939 at 2/6, is easy of reference and it covers practically every point likely to arise.

Our own view is that if a chairman possesses a fairly good working knowledge of the common points of procedure he can, without any difficulty, deal with most troublesome people and troublesome points by the display of a little humour and tact.

At the same time we advise the adoption of some Standing Orders, and it would not be a bad idea to put the troublesome ones on the committee which would frame the Orders.

By the way, the N.C.L.C. have a postal course on Chairmanship.

Meetings Delinquency

Question.—From the same Party, but from another officer, comes a query asking how we should deal with troublesome persons who are everlastingly criticising the officers and finding fault with whatever is done. These people, it appears, are not suspect of any subversive intentions but they pursue a policy of pin-pricks which is uncomfortable to the officers and disturbing to the meetings.

Answer.—There is quite a simple remedy. Give these people something better to do. Delinquency, whether in children or adults, is more often than not merely misplaced energy. A cantankerous person can make no end of trouble, and some people seem born to this sort of thing. But the vast majority of people respond to responsibility and we have known wonderful cures brought about by giving critics the very job to do which they said was ill done by others. In any case, we advise a little quiet endeavour to fasten an office of responsibility on to each of the persons referred to. With a little tact that can be done, and in the majority of cases a change is very soon effected.

Public Order Act strengthened

Question.—"In these parts of the country we suffer a great deal from Communist activities. Every one of our meetings, indoor or outdoor, are attended by Communists who come in force to upset and destroy all we attempt to do. We have not the strength or wish to do a lot of chucking out, and the enemy is sometimes insolent even to the police who attend. We believe we can prosecute, although we don't want to, but what is our position in that matter?"

Answer.—Disorderly conduct for the purpose of preventing the transaction of business at a lawful public meeting was first made an offence by the Public Meeting Act 1908. Any person who incites others to commit an offence is equally guilty. The Act has not been

much used for obvious reasons, and because no precise instructions were laid down as to how or by whom proceedings might be instituted. The Act, however, has now been amended and strengthened and a fresh section was added by the Public Order Act 1936. This section reads:

"If any constable reasonably suspects any person of committing an offence under the foregoing provisions of this Section, he may, if requested so to do by the chairman of the meeting, require that person to declare to him immediately his name and address and, if that person refuses or fails so to declare his name and address, or gives a false name and address, he shall be guilty of an offence under this Sub-section and liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding forty shillings, and if he refuses or fails so to declare his name and address, or if the constable reasonably suspects him of giving a false name and address, the constable may, without warrant, arrest him."

It should be noted that the term "disorderly" is nowhere defined. We suggest that a casual interruption or a demand to put a question are not sufficient to complete an offence. Continued defiance of the chair or continued interruption of a speech are both obviously disorderly acts which, if continued, would make the transaction of the business of the meeting impossible.

It should also be noted that it is not only the chairman, but the constable, who must be satisfied of the disorderly nature of the conduct complained of. Therefore, the early and peremptory call which is sometimes heard for the stewards to do their duty must not be extended to the constable unless a chairman is quite sure of his ground. As to whether the powers under the Act should be used is a matter for discretion, but we ourselves would not be disposed to suffer intolerable conduct without using the remedy which the law provides.

Sales of Work and Rationing

Question.—A correspondent tells us that his Party formerly held one or two Sales of Work during the year and they also had certain functions where members contributed presents of various goods which were afterwards sold or consumed in some money-raising effort.

He asks what is the position as affected by rationing and other restrictions.

Answer.—It seems to us rather late in the day to put a query about rationing because it has all along been an offence to acquire rationed goods other than on a ration card. One may share one's rations with one's family, but it certainly is an offence to give rationed goods away so that they may be sold again or consumed by others. A purchaser or consumer also is equally guilty. The law might be enforced in regard to pooled meals, but how far one may be allowed to entertain friends is an obscurity which has not been cleared up. The matter should not be pressed too far either.

Regarding sales of work, here again the rationing of clothing creates difficulty. We fear the sale of work of the kind formerly understood is to-day out of the question. Firstly, because most raw materials are themselves rationed and coupons must be given up, and secondly because the completed articles are subject not only to Purchase Tax, but to the surrender of coupons, provided, of course, they are not of the limited class of goods which are exempt.

It is conceivable that goods could be confined to non-rationed materials and made-up articles, or to the sort of goods or produce mostly contributed by men. But the difficulties are there and the success is not likely to be great.

Publishing Early Socialist Writings

Question.—"We have been thinking of publishing in the ——— News (a local Labour journal—Ed. "L.O.") some of the early Socialist pamphlets and writings which so well laid the foundations of our Movement. I have got a fine collection of these and they would make magnificent reading. I am, however, told that there is a risk in doing this and I may get into trouble over copyright. What is the position of this?"

Answer.—We would not advise our friend to attempt publication of anything of the sort without carefully ascertaining whether the writers are alive, and if not who may be their representatives. If a writer is dead it is desirable to ascertain the date of death because copyright is counted from that date.

It is possible that some few of the early writings are free of copyright,

but even so it would appear necessary to comply with certain Board of Trade regulations.

It is possible, also, that in some cases permission to reproduce would be readily given, but in one outstanding case we are certain permission would not now be given.

Our opinion is that it would be quite impossible at the present time to publish anything like a representative selection from the Socialist writings that were extant at the beginning of the century—more's the pity.

The duration of copyright under the Copyright Act of 1911 is for the life of the author and 50 years after "provided that at any time after the expiration of twenty-five years, or in the case of a work in which copyright subsists at the passing of this Act, thirty years, from the death of the author of a published work, copyright in the work shall not be deemed to be infringed by the reproduction of the work for sale if the person reproducing the work proves that he has given the prescribed notice in writing of his intention to reproduce the work, and that he has paid in the prescribed manner to, or for the benefit of, the owner of the copyright royalties in respect of all copies of the work sold by him calculated at the rate of ten per cent. on the price at which he publishes the work; and, for the purposes of this proviso, the Board of Trade may make such regulations as they think fit."

L.L.P. Account Keeping

Question.—"I should be very glad if in our "L.O." you could give some hints on account-keeping for a local Labour Party. I am a new secretary and our books have not been well kept. In fact each secretary in the past seems to have had his own system or no system at all and I have had handed to me quite a lot of books going into the past years from few of which it is possible to get any clear indication of income or expenditure for the period any secretary held office. There are actually nine different cash books, not one of them completely filled up and not one of them clear as to details."

Answer.—We are glad to note our correspondent's desire for improvement. That there has been great room for betterment in the direction indicated has long been known to us,

though it is also manifest that there has been a great improvement in recent years, particularly among the large and more successful parties.

Perusal of the balance sheets and statements of accounts which reach us often tells its own tale. We are unable to make top or tail of either the income or the expenditure in two statements which have reached us this week, although in these cases we think it is because items are not clearly stated, and give the impression that debit items are entered on the credit side and vice versa; net items and gross items also seem to be jumbled up.

Some years ago we published a series of articles on this question and we gave illustrations of account books and the methods of using them suitable for both large and small parties. It is impossible in the space at our disposal here to cover this question adequately and we propose shortly to republish those articles.

In the meantime, we cannot do much more than indicate that the needs of parties differ according to their size or financial transactions. In the larger parties some degree of elaboration is necessary and someone with a knowledge of book-keeping should be able to direct what books are necessary and the manner in which they should be kept. There is a further complication in the fact that books are kept sometimes by the treasurer and sometimes by the secretary, and in most cases partly by both.

We will not here attempt to deal with the question of the larger parties, but as regards the smaller ones we deem it unwise for any secretary to begin an elaborate set of books with few entries and such as can only be of service where the transactions are large and numerous.

The small local parties require, of course, books which record the payments of members. This is to some extent a separate matter from the party book-keeping as such as the totals only of the contribution book will concern the general financial statement.

A cash book is essential and this should bear a record of each item of income and of each payment. If it has analysis columns so much the better. This completes the equipment needed for lots of small organisations, provided that any debts or bills

incurred are kept account of on some separate part of the book. When additional activities are entered into which temporarily require fairly numerous entries of cash in and out, it is desirable to use a small special book for the special purpose.

When we come to parties having daily transactions and probably also having both debtors and creditors in the business sense, other books become necessary, such as a day book and a ledger. But a busy secretary or treasurer may also use a journal and enter all his transactions, whether of cash in and out or of goods purchased, etc., in this book as the transactions are made.

Letters Received

A Lancashire Secretary writes:—

"I have read your 'Labour Organiser' since 1923, when I used to receive them from the late Mr. F. H. Edwards, and I do assure you they are a very useful book to have with you."

An ex-Labour Agent writes from somewhere in England:—

"I came here in the beginning of October, was immediately sent on a specialist electrical course at a well-known works in Birmingham (I was in Coventry during the blitz), came back here and was promoted to the rank of corporal and employed as a military instructor, my subjects being mathematics and electrical theory. Since then there have been a number of promotions. I now hold the rank of sergeant, and have been given a new class room, complete with sliding blackboards, name on door, and lecturer's rostrum. I found this a bit frightening at first, but one soon settles down to the scholastic life.

"Some four hours a day are spent lecturing and demonstrating, two hours in dictating notes and a further two hours in marking and preparing examination papers, etc. Workshop hours are from 8—5 p.m. and then, after tea, regimental duties commence and one has to take turn at various duties, orderly sergeant, guard commander, etc.

"I find the work very interesting, and one is in a position to meet a great number of fellows drawn from all sec-

tions of the community. When I can I spend some time trying to ascertain their points of view and political opinions. I am amazed to find how few of the 'soldiers of democracy' know what they are fighting for, why, and what they hope to achieve. This comes as a rather bitter blow to one who has spent some considerable time in trying to influence popular opinion and to spread a philosophy of life.

"There are many strange anomalies and much injustice in army life and in army discipline. A peculiar moral code prevails which tends, if anything, to favour the unscrupulous and punish the conscientious. In the first place, of course, the rates of pay are little short of scandalous, and we find that the British soldier is the worst paid in the Empire. This leads to trouble between sections, etc. Apart from the obvious injustice, great hardship is imposed upon men and their families.

"One of these days, when I have the time, I'll set down my impressions of army life and the army system. It ought to make good reading.

"Just as a commentary, after eight months' army service, five months of which I have spent as a military instructor and an N.C.O., I am still only partially equipped and still have to wear some civilian gear."

Another ex-Labour Agent writes:—

"I have been convinced of one or two things since I have been in the Army. One thing is certain, and that is that I was doing a lot more useful work in civilian life and another is that L.P. organisation is exceptionally efficient as compared to organisation in the Army.

"Many thanks for the 'L.O.' which comes like a breath of fresh air on every occasion I receive it.

THE WANDERLUST

It is necessary to remind readers that the stories under the above heading are FICTION.

Some readers will be disappointed. Yet it is somewhat embarrassing to have to answer questions as to certain characters, their latest adventures, or present location.

No characters in these stories relate to living persons, and all names given are fictitious.

*By the Editor**Sally Longtooth*

The Wanderlust

No. 11

Joe Formby, country postman at Newent, was newly married, and badly married, too, for what is worse for a rural postman, used to daily chats and exchanges of news with every pretty girl on his round than a jealous wife. Jean, indeed, had even waylaid him on his delivery; she nagged him mercilessly should his round not be finished by 11.30 a.m., and she had threatened to scratch the eyes out of any woman who kept Joe talking while he ought to be delivering letters.

It was an evil fate, therefore, that befel Joe one August evening as he was returning two hours late from his country collection. The day had been one of terrific storms and tempest. Fallen trees had blocked some of the lanes, brooks had over-flowed, and torrential rains had flooded roads and fields.

It was at one of those many places in this neighbourhood where the lane has been cut through the solid rock that Joe came across a forlorn figure. It was that of Madge Binns, "jiggered," as she expressed it, and unable to proceed through the two-foot flood to her mother's cottage, only a quarter of a mile away. Madge wasn't always forlorn, and Joe knew her as a smart and handsome girl, though he and others had doubts about her character.

It was like Joe to offer to see her through, but the sack of letters presented an obstacle. One cannot carry a girl through flood in one arm and hold a sack of letters on one's shoulder with the other. Something would get wet. But Joe and Madge fixed the matter eventually and, with the girl on his back, her legs through his arms outstretched before her, Joe managed. He held the sack of letters in front of him and began the wade.

Fortunately the water became less deep as he proceeded, but Joe needed several rests before he got through. Madge revived somewhat and seemed to enjoy her experience. Certainly she made the most of it, kissing him once or twice, and by exciting little jolts

she made him realise more than once what a bundle of mischief he carried on his back.

At last they reached dry land. It was exactly opposite the cottage window. Joe dropped his bag, but he didn't get rid of Madge so easily. That lady, as Joe slid her off his back, contrived to make a show that would have made Jean plain ramping mad. It was at this moment that the cottage door opened and to Joe's supreme and utter horror there emerged—Sally Longtooth!

* * * *

Now every age has had its gossips. In James I. reign there must have been a lot of them, but since the world began there has been but one Sally Longtooth, which is why we must describe the hag so minutely.

Sally was an old, old woman, active, wizened and malignant. No-one in Newent knew whence she sprung or her youthful history. Mayhap she never had any and was there when Newent, centuries ago, first became a cluster of cottages on the newly-cut road to Wales!

Sally derived her nickname from her one remaining Stonehenge-looking tooth—a long, fearsome, yellow fang that sprang from her left upper jaw and overhung her lower lip by nearly an inch. Sally wasn't pleasant to meet on a dark winter night, for her coal-black eyes glowed at one in the darkness and her manner was witchlike. Yet, strange to relate, she had the entree of every house for miles around. Mothers sometimes locked the door when the children reported Sally Longtooth in the offing. That wasn't much use because Sally always sensed when the occupant was in, and a wheedling tongue soon opened the door, and the cupboard too, for a cup of tea and a gush of gossip.

Sally lived on one diet. It was scandal. How she discovered secrets no-one knew, but she had a weird instinct for unsavoury or unpleasant news, and a surer one for spreading it.

Husbands had threatened, fathers had stormed and women had raved that their inmost privacies should be known to others. But Sally serenely smiled down her long tooth and carried on. Daring ones said that Sally's tooth was to her what his hair was to Samson; that she would go back to the devil the day she lost it. Such folk never prospered.

* * *

Sally greeted Joe and Madge with a quiver of her fang intended to convey a smile and a "good-night," and vanished into the gloaming. How she got through the water doesn't matter. Certainly Joe didn't offer her a ride on his back.

Next morning, as Joe started on his round at 6.30 a.m., he caught sight of Sally's black skirt as, armed with the spiciest bit she had had for weeks, she set out to get her breakfast on the strength of it. Joe guessed his fate.

* * *

But Joe guessed wrong. Knowing what was in store for him, he didn't go home to dinner nor to tea. At four o'clock he started on his evening collection.

Newent Church is a barn of a place with a full and leafy churchyard and a more than usual eeriness at night.

It was nine o'clock by the striking that the Rev. Rimmel Pole fell over something in the pathway to the vicarage. He struck a match. It was Joe. Like all others in those precincts, except the parson—he was stone dead.

* * *

They found a bottle by Joe's side, a gin bottle, the like of which lay in long neglected rows on Sally's shelves, in her windows and on her floor. The bottle was empty and whatever it contained had a sweet and sickly smell.

Prussic acid, prussic, prussic, soon that word was in everyone's mouth. The police closeted Sally and questioned her closely with no result, except a curse and a cackle. They questioned Jean with less result. There was an unsatisfactory verdict that Joe had died from the drinking of poison, to wit, etc., etc., there being no evidence to show how or by whom administered.

* * *

One of the characteristics of murder is that it is contagious. Murders come in spates or in twos or threes, rarely singly at long intervals.

Joe had not been buried a week ere

Newent had a bigger sensation. Jean Formby was found one sweltering afternoon in the croft* that lay a little way back from the churchyard. She, too, was dead, and a bottle lay by her side—a bottle that was sweet and sickly to the smell; not one of Sally's bottles, however, but Jean's own.

Again the police interviewed Sally Longtooth, but just why, they weren't at all sure themselves. Again all they got was a curse and a cackle, a queer, horrible sound that nearly froze the younger policeman's blood. It seemed to come from Sally's tooth and run down it as along a sounding board.

There was the same hopeless questioning and searching; the same verdict. Newent was in the news.

* * *

Down past the croft runs the railway line. A footpath leads beyond and, descending steeply, crosses a little brook, rising again steeply to a lane beyond. The little valley so formed is wild and overgrown. There are several springs in the rocky hillsides and some of them are reputed to be medicinal.

Passers-by witnessed a curious and stirring sight one afternoon a few days later. Some distance along the brook two women were fighting, an old woman and a young one; and the old one was by no means getting the worst of it. It was Sally Longtooth and Madge Binns. After a terrific round lasting a quarter of an hour the younger woman fled. A well-aimed bottle followed her along with a torrent of curses of such original wording and singeing power as to scare the on-lookers over the line.

Newent hadn't done with disturbance, however. It was midnight when the cottagers living on the fringe of the croft were awakened by a fresh row. In the stillness two women's voices rose, shrill and unearthly. Then came a din such as twenty devils might make at a scrimmage in hell. It was a screeching, snarling, screaming racket—now high and shrill, now low and gruesome, then sharp and incisive, followed at last by one long high-noted squeal, and silence.

Next morning they searched the croft. They found plenteous signs of battle—and a long yellow bone, bloodied and broken at the end. It was the tooth and talisman of Sally Longtooth.

* Field.

Yes, murders *do* come in spates. It wasn't long gone seven before more news came, startling, unexpected news. Madge Binns was dead, poisoned, a bottle by her side. She had died some hours before.

* * *

There is nothing in life that stirs the living like death—by murder!

Detectives, police, amateur sleuths, newspaper men, the whole population were soon on the job. The murderer must be found.

The police heard about the scrap in the night. Determined to arrest at all costs and fight out the issue afterwards, they called on Sally.

Their knock at the door was unanswered. They burst it open and found Sally, a toothless, broken wreck, on the floor—a torn and bleeding hag, whose slender thread of life was at the point of breaking. Before she died she gave one clue in one broken, half-understood sentence: Madge was her grand-daughter!

* * *

Now, dear reader, you may clear up this mystery if you please in your own way. Who poisoned Joe? Who poisoned Jean? Who murdered Madge? Who did Sally in?

You will never guess right, but Dr. D., a young and able medico who came of an ancient family in these parts, found the clues. He pieced them together. He doubted that deliberate murder had been done in either case. We shall have his conclusions in his own words, set down, as they were, in slanting long-hand, in the style of that day.

* * *

"I was not at all interested in the Newent poisoning cases until one day, rummaging in some old drawers, I came across papers belonging to my great-grandfather, who was also a medico. I had read these papers somewhat carelessly once before, and among them was a reference to a series of poisoning cases that had taken place in the neighbourhood some 130 years ago. They were never solved.

"That set me thinking. One peculiarity about the recent cases was that neither deceased had apparently detected anything about the drink beforehand. Now prussic acid has a characteristic smell. Why was not the smell detected in time?

"The obvious explanation lay in the

bottle. Each person had been poisoned out of a bottle.

"Now a bottle is an unusual vehicle for the poisoner's hand, at any rate, three times repeated. Poisoning from the contents of a bottle is usually a case of mistaken identity—the wrong bottle is taken out of a cupboard, or a deliberate trap is set for the victim.

"To me, the use of the bottles as the vehicle for three poisonings seemed too crude, too open to detection, for a deliberate poisoner to use this method, especially after the publicity given to the first case.

"I determined to probe the matter at my leisure, but an illness brought a patient to my surgery who had witnessed the fight between two of the deceased. Hardly expecting anything to result, I sauntered along the brook on my next call in that direction.

"I did not discover any signs of a conflict until, moving a little uphill, I came across signs of a scrimmage. But, to my astonishment, my trained senses detected also the slightest faint trace of an odour similar to prussic acid. I looked for vegetation that might account for this, but found none.

"To my further amazement, shortly afterwards I found a small cleft in the rock formation and a trickle of water definitely bearing the familiar odour. Having a flask with me, I emptied the contents (inside me) and, having thoroughly washed the flask in the brook, I took a sample of the rock water home.

"I was never so astounded as to discover that the water actually did carry an appreciable quantity of hydrocyanic acid in solution. Now I have never heard of free prussic acid in nature before. It could not have been put there, for the water came, drop by drop, out of the bank.

"Some chemical process of natural distillation at which I can only guess had obviously been at work. Maybe the origin was vegetable, and the laurel grows wild hereabouts; but a prodigious bury of such, and an altogether unknown agent, must have been at work to effect the chemical change, and in such quantities as to affect the spring. On the other hand, I doubt if the process is continuous.

"The soil hereabouts is largely impregnated with iron. Coal measures are found not far away, while earth tremours on occasion prove the instability of the earth settlements. Can

it be that some natural heat or process has united the carbon and nitrogenous matters far down in the bowels of the earth, for the water was slightly warm? I cannot say.

"Applying my reasoning to the events that had recently occurred, and to the further knowledge I have gained as to legends surrounding these springs and especially as to their alleged value in the relationship of men and women, I have come to the conclusion that the postman sought out the witch for a potion. Knowing nothing of the poison now flowing, Sally sent Joe to the spring for a dose to heal his woes. It did more, for he was possibly drunk at the time.

"Jean Formby came to the spring of her own accord, though maybe she also had consulted Sally. In the heat she drank heavily from her bottle. Death would not be long.

"Madge Binns, without doubt, suspected her grandmother of having caused both deaths. She probably didn't know of her relationship to Sally till the night of her fight, for it was she who was in the croft. Madge died by her own hand in shame and mortification.

"I have only to add that on my second visit to the spring it had completely dried up and it probably only runs at long intervals and after such torrential rains as lately we have had in these parts."

* * *

And that, dear readers, appears to me to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So—long!

(Concluded from page 2)

papers taught us how to hate; they don't teach us how to love.

Let this moral get home. Socialism cannot be built on hate. Labour men and women might to-day be asking themselves: "Is the nation really putrid?" For the newspapers would have us believe so if we accept their stories. But we don't, and won't.

We should like Labour organisations to realise that while corruption and abuses must be fought, the men with the muck-rake—they who find a stink where there isn't one—must be fought, too. Morals are more important than morale in the establishment of our new order. Let us at least presume that the majority of our countrymen are all right that way, even if our daily rags are certainly not.

Selected Reading

The final stage of "notes" preparation concerns that of the particular method of handling notes for the actual time of speech-delivery. For this, there are two outstanding methods. One consists of having a suitable number of pieces of thick paper or thin cardboard, of convenient and uniform size—of say, three inches by two. On every piece should be placed one leading head of speech and its supporting bits of essential information, whether of dates, ideas, or quotations. The other method is one which the writer has used for many years. For this you need a sheet of strong paper about five inches by three and a half. Then wisely-chosen leaders should be placed on the sheet at equal distance from one another, so that, following a glance at the note in order of sequence, the speaker, automatically, may turn the part of the sheet backwards, downwards, and inwards, and out of sight, which will bring the next note to first prominence. Whilst the other method has the virtue of keeping every phrase distinct from every other, this method not only prevents any muddling-up of the cards, it tends to keep the practised speaker more in touch with the full context of his speech at a glance. (From "Essentials of Public Speaking" by Fred Longden).

The extent to which our mental life is unconscious — i.e., repressed — is usually underestimated, but it can be visualised clearly by realising the size of the social institutions which are built up by our repressed energies. The gigantic edifice of modern society is almost in its entirety a superstructure erected with the energy derived from the unconscious. This shows us indirectly that at least ninety per cent. of man's mental life is submerged in the unconscious. And because all the more serious work of society—production of goods, religion, art, science, politics, etc.—fails to satisfy the insatiable drives of human beings, we starve mentally without a certain amount of amusement. *A government which fails to give amusement to its citizens cannot survive for long.*

[And also political parties—this is a lesson we have often sought to impart.—Ed. L.O.]

The way in which, for instance, the cinema gives us a substitute satisfac-

tion for repressed desires is a fascinating study. . . A socialist movement is psychologically sound only if it provides an outlet for all or most of our repressed instincts. In this respect the Bolshevik party is far more successful than the Social Democratic Parties. (From "An Outline of Psychology"—by Lyster Jameson).

Leg Pulling

Norah Loft attempts, in the "Daily Herald" (issue 13th June), to prove that the Woman-in-Authority is neither fussy or over-conscious of power; not inclined to treat younger women hardly, not easily flustered, and not disposed to retain authority in her own hands. In espousal of this thesis we are told that the Woman-in-Authority is rather like the presiding chimpanzee at the Zoo tea-party!—which is something we have often previously observed. We have had some insight into the behaviour of many of the old battle-axes who have pushed themselves into place and power in almost every kind of war (and peace) social organisation, and we are not impressed—except by the comparison.

It is not nice to read a *defence* of women in which it is suggested that they think it no more reprehensible to be unwilling to delegate authority than for a new wife to want to lend out her husband. Miss Loft would far better have left her case to a woman hater, or at least to those like ourselves who don't like *some* types of women!

Organisers need to work with all sorts of persons for the world is made up of sorts—especially sorts of women. It is necessary for organisers to know people's weaknesses and their virtues, for men have many, and women not a few. Hence our interest in the article.

Lest someone should say we are flippant about the matter, let us point out that it is an organiser's duty to understand human nature, to get the best out of it, and to lie down in peace at times even with those who are raging lions. We need not minimise the difficulties of doing this, especially the difficulties of working, with, or lying down in peace with, "the presiding chimpanzee at a Zoo tea-party."

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Previous donations were acknowledged in our April issue (No. 233). Further donations should be sent on immediately. We are far short of the sum required.